

OEXA 83-0598/1

24 March 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 24 March Briefing of SSCI on Agency Publications

1. On 24 March 1983, the Director briefed the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on the rationale for limiting the number of unclassified Agency publications issued to the general public. He was accompanied by Richard Kerr, Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence and Rae Hufstutler, Director, Office of Soviet Affairs. The closed briefing was held in Room S-407, The Capitol. A transcript was taken. (U)

2. Senator Goldwater (R., AZ) presided. In addition, Senators Cohen (R., ME) and Lugar (R., IN) were present. The staff present were Rob Simmons, Staff Director, Charles Andreae, Robin Cleveland, Tom Connolly, Lot Cooke, John Elliff, Dan Finn, Jim Dykstra, Gary Schmitt, Peter Sullivan and Vicki Toensing. (U)

3. In his brief opening statement, Chairman Goldwater referred to the March 1983 Armed Forces Journal which stated that the CIA would no longer publish its dollar cost comparison of U.S. and Soviet defense activity. He went on to say that he understood that the Agency had decided to limit its publication of other reports as well. He told the Director that it was an unfortunate decision because our reports had been among the most influential and interesting that we had done. He expressed concern that the public was being denied these intelligence products. He concluded by saying that he had asked the Director to come so that he could explain the rationale for limiting Agency unclassified reports to the public. (U)

4. The Director began his explanation by recapping the situation prior to the decision to limit our public reports. He referred to the controversies caused by our reports on Soviet

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military spending and said that we had exposed ourselves to unnecessary criticism. He also said that it was not the responsibility of CIA to educate the public. He also emphasized that we do recognize our responsibility to provide policy makers and Congress with classified intelligence and have concentrated on that, increasing our number of estimates in recent years. The Director explained that his decision was based on a recommendation made by Admiral Inman after a study of the matter in July 1981. His view was that on balance, the policy has worked well.

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5. Senator Cohen told the Director that the Senators needed to have unclassified CIA information to rebut inaccurate information that appears in the press and to support Administration policies. He gave as an example a recent New York Times article that misrepresented the Agency estimate of Soviet military spending. Senator Cohen had an unclassified Agency paper on Soviet military spending which, after some discussion, the Director said he was free to use in any way he chose. At this point Senator Goldwater suggested to the Director that he assign someone to come up to the Committee and point out to them the inaccuracies in articles on intelligence that appear in the press. The Director accepted the suggestion but made no commitment concerning it.

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6. Senator Lugar asked why he could not use the unclassified paper on Soviet military spending and to cite the CIA as his authority. Again, after some discussion the Director said that he could. Senator Lugar said that the Members often felt hamstrung because they could not rebut some of the information they know is inaccurate. The Director conceded that he understood their problem. (C)

7. Rae Hufstutler explained that in looking at Soviet military spending we take both a retrospective and prospective view. There

is sometimes a difference between what we estimate in the immediate future and the actual situation when we review it afterward. Following this, there was a discussion of the recent New York Times article on the subject. Senator Cohen referred to what he perceived as a difference between DOD estimates of Soviet military spending trends and those made by CIA. (C)

8. Chairman Goldwater said he would digest the Director's comments on this matter. He added that he would solicit the views of other Members of the Committee on this subject and pass them on to the Director. He asked the Director to review his policy on limiting the public dissemination of our product. Senator Goldwater said he agreed that CIA was responsible for educating the public but stressed that we should be prepared to educate the Committee Members. He asked the Director to get back to the Committee because they were not fully satisfied with the current policy. (C)



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